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***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

**Mayor Wells-Armstrong Participates During the Mayors Innovation Project Summer Meeting**

**Kankakee, IL** – Mayor Chasity Wells-Armstrong was one of many mayors and local leaders throughout the nation to attend the Mayors Innovation Project Annual Summer Meeting earlier this month. The Mayors Innovation Project is a non-profit, non-partisan learning network specifically created for mayors committed to equity, environmental sustainability and transparent democracy. The Center on Wisconsin Strategy (COWS) is a progressive policy institute housed on the campus of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. It was founded in 1991 by UW Professor Joel Rogers. The organization says that its core values are democracy, sustainability and equality.

Former and present mayors have the opportunity to be a part of the steering committee, who decide where the meetings take place, as well as, the content that will be discussed. Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Indiana is a part of the committee. Buttigieg is also running for President in 2020. He was not attendance at this year's Mayors Innovation Project due to campaigning, however is an active member.

During the meeting, Mayors learned about various approaches to addressing violence in their respective communities. Other highlights included an overview of strategies to provide stable residents, address inequity, tours of programs focused on supporting and engaging youth, and a panel discussion regarding opportunity zone investments.

"Many municipalities are facing similar challenges and it is helpful to have access to organizations that are committed to supporting the work of mayors at the local level. I appreciate the work of the Mayors Innovation Project and the invitation extended to me to participate this year," said Mayor Wells-Armstrong.

The Mayors Innovation Project has principles that align to the *Kankakee Forward* agenda, specifically around equity. The Mayors Innovation Project sponsored Mayor Wells-Armstrong to attend the meeting hoping to facilitate meaningful discussions around diversity and equitable representation in public policy. Only two mayors from the state of Illinois were in attendance including Mayor Wells-Armstrong and Mayor Chris Koos from the City of Normal.

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The City of Kankakee is dedicated to protecting, building and nurturing the community while enhancing lives. We are a historic, vibrant, and active riverfront community. We continue to transform into an extraordinary place to dream, grow, and thrive. Embracing our diversity, we strive to be progressive, inclusive, and innovative. For more information on the City of Kankakee, please visit the website at [www.citykankakee-il.gov](http://www.citykankakee-il.gov).